#### T-1156

#### **Easton Gas Manufacturing Plant**

#### **Architectural Survey File**

This is the architectural survey file for this MIHP record. The survey file is organized reverse-chronological (that is, with the latest material on top). It contains all MIHP inventory forms, National Register nomination forms, determinations of eligibility (DOE) forms, and accompanying documentation such as photographs and maps.

Users should be aware that additional undigitized material about this property may be found in on-site architectural reports, copies of HABS/HAER or other documentation, drawings, and the "vertical files" at the MHT Library in Crownsville. The vertical files may include newspaper clippings, field notes, draft versions of forms and architectural reports, photographs, maps, and drawings. Researchers who need a thorough understanding of this property should plan to visit the MHT Library as part of their research project; look at the MHT web site (mht.maryland.gov) for details about how to make an appointment.

All material is property of the Maryland Historical Trust.

Last Updated: 04-05-2004

#### MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST **DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes X

Property Name: Easton Gas Plant	Inventory Number: T-1156
Address: 1 South West Street City: Easton	Zip Code: 21601
County: Talbot USGS Topographic Map	o: Easton
Owner: Town of Easton; Easton Utilities Is	s the property being evaluated a district? No yes
Fax Parcel Number: 1311 Tax Map Number: 104 Tax Account ID	Number: 027174
Project: Property Remediation and Building Removal Age	ency: MD Department of the Environment
	Date:
Site visit by MHT Staff:noyes Name:yes the property located within a historic district?yes _Xno	Property is being evaluated as part of one
If the property is within a district District Is	nventory Number:
	ame: Easton Historic District
Preparer's Recommendation: Contributing resource X yesno No	n-contributing but eligible in another context
Criteria: XABCCD Considerations: A  Documentation on the property/district is presented in: MIHP Form and Co	
Description of Property and Eligibility Determination: (Use continuation sheet if	and the state of t
The former Easton Gas Plant was constructed in 1934 to replace an older contrown of Easton to manufacture gas for municipal lighting and for domestic Plant continued to manufacture gas until 1955 when the local production was natural gas. The building was intended to house all of the operations of the rand billing, meter and equipment repair, and gas production.  The building that was constructed in 1934 is a two-level, brick building on a The building shows evidence of the influence of Colonial-Revival design on castellated and corbelled cornice with a projecting central bay and Palladian metal, industrial frames with clear glass. The roof on the administrative sect roof over the process area is a pitched gable roof with a lower flat roof over Dover or Court Street.	and commercial heating and lighting. The Gas is halted and the Town's system was converted to municipal gas utility with space for administration a poured, reinforced concrete slab and foundation. In the east of West Street façade and entrance with a influenced entrance. The windows are multi-light tion is a flat roof laid behind a parapet wall. The
It is recommended that the property be considered eligible for listing on the Historic District. The current district includes the property directly across W	
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW	
Eligibility recommended Eligibility not recommended	
Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A Comments: This block is located in the Easter	B_C_D_E_F_G_None
suggests Pd of Significance ends 10130-	
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services	16/03
Reviewer, Onice of Preservation Services	Date
Reviewer, NR Program	Date

#### Inventory No. T-1156

# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

1. Name of F	Property	(indicate preferre	d name)				
historic	Easton Ga	as Plant			··· <del>·</del>		
other	Easton Ga	as Manufacturing Plant					
2. Location			·				
street and number	1 South W	Vest Street	<del>-</del>		•	no	t for publication
city, town	Easton					vic	cinity
county	Talbot					_	
3. Owner of	Property	(give names and mail	ing address	ses of all own	iers)		
name	Town of l	Easton/Easton Utilities					
street and number	P.O. Box	520			telep	hone	
city, town	Easton		state	MD	zip c	ode 216	01
4. Location of	of Legal D	escription				·	
courthouse, registry	of deeds, etc.	Talbot County Cour	rthouse	lit	per 258	folio 318	
city, town	Easton	tax map 1	04 tax	parcel	1131	tax ID num	ber 027174
Contrib Determ Determ Record Historic	outing Resource in nined Eligible for t nined Ineligible for ded by HABS/HAE c Structure Repor	n National Register District n Local Historic District he National Register/Man the National Register/Ma ER t or Research Report at M nt of the Environment	yland Regis aryland Reg				
6. Classifica	tion		<u>-</u>				
Categorydistrict _X_building(s)structuresiteobject	Ownership _X_publicprivateboth	Current Function agriculturecommerce/tradedefensedomesticducationfunerarygovernmenthealth careindustry	eresctrawurX_va	ndscape creation/culti ligion ocial ansportation ork in progresi aknown acant/not in u her:	Coluressse Nu		Noncontributing  O buildings sites structures objects Total

7. Description		Inventory No. T-1156			
Condition					
excellent	deteriorated				

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

good

X fair

ruins

attered

The Easton Gas Plant was constructed in 1934 to replace an older building which was used to manufacture gas for use within the Town of Easton. The existing building is a two-story, brick building on a poured, reinforced concrete floor. The office area is at a higher level than the side work areas along Dover Street. The gas production areas on the south side of the building are a single level but were built to appear as a two-story building to accommodate the gas manufacturing equipment. The building was erected to process gas for heating and for lighting and to provide workshops and office space for Easton Utilities. The building has a flat roof with parapet walls. The front façade faces South West Street and it is marked by a variety of Colonial Revival features. Among them are a castellated front with a corbelled cornice. The entrance door is set in a faux Palladian opening with a central arch and side windows rather than side lights. There is a cast stone marquee across the front which is inscribed "Easton Gas Plant" and to which are added the dates 1860 and 1934. The former marks the date that the gas plant went into operation and the later indicates the date of construction of the existing building. There are no remains of the gas process within the building except for a large vertical tank which may have been a reheater and some evidence of piping. The meters in the meter room date to after 1955 when gas production was halted at this facility and the town shifted to other sources for gas. The building has a landscaped lawn on the front or West Street side and on the Dover Street side. The rear and south side open onto an asphalt-paved parking area. The entire complex is contaminated with residue from the gas manufacturing operations.

The Easton Gas Plant was constructed in 1934 to replace an older gas manufacturing plant. This building is constructed of four-course common bond, red brick with a poured, concrete-slab foundation. The building appears as to have three distinct sections but it is a single unit. The offices and a workroom are located on the east section which faces South West Street. This section has a flat roof with a parapet wall marked by a corbelled cornice and a slightly projecting front area. The single-leaf entrance is located within a faux Palladian design element with a central arch and two side windows serving as the outer element of the Palladian window. The gas production area is located on the southwest section of the building and is distinguished by a peak roof that rises above the office and workroom section. This tall unit was constructed to provide the necessary height for the gas processing equipment. The third section is a low, two-level unit on the north side or the Dover Street side. This area contained additional workrooms and a garage. Attached to the northwest side is a small, one-story meter house with a flat roof. This appears to have been part of the original building as the brickwork and the foundation show the same construction marks and there are no visible seems in the building.

The windows of the gas plant have metal industrial frames with clear glass. Each of the windows has a cast stone lintel and a flat arch above. Most of the windows appear to be either original to the construction of the building or to have been manufactured for this building. None of the window openings have been reduced in size or altered. The principal door on West Street is a single-leaf wood door set in a wood frame. There are several single-leaf, personnel doors which also appear to be original or consistent with the design of the building. However, there are a number of roll-up garage doors on the north and south sides which replace original doors or are set into openings that have been enlarged to accommodate this newer type of door. However, there are two large garage-type doors on the south and west side that do appear original to the building. In addition to the use of the wood doors, they are marked by the placement of a large multi-light transom above each.

The interior is plain and reflects the building's industrial character. The entrance hall is very small and leads to three rooms. To the north or left is an area that was used as an office by the gas company. This is a single, rectangular room with a door that leads to the interior of the building at the far northwest side. To the right is a small hall that leads to the side workyard and to which have been added a washroom for the workcrews. This area is partitioned by cement block and contains a small shower area and two lavatories. To the rear of the entrance hall, there is a door that leads to a stair to the upper level and a door that leads into the manufacturing or process area. The process areas are large open spaces which would have contained the heaters, piping, and purifiers needed to process manufactured gas. All of the equipment has been removed and there is very little evidence of attachment points in the floors or on the walls in the manufacturing area.

Beyond the building, there is the paved parking area to the south and the west. The area to the east and the north of the building has been landscaped with grass, trees, and other small plantings. There is no evidence, above ground, of the gas holders and the piping and distribution system for the gas plant. In addition, there is no above ground evidence of the tanks and other holders which are located on the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps for the 1885 to 1940 period. A 1961 drawing of the distribution system of the plant,

Inventory No. T-1156

Name Continuation Sheet

Number 7 Page 1

which was prepared by the Easton Utilities staff, shows an extensive amount of gas manufacturing equipment but that has all been removed.

Inventory No. T-1156

Name Easton Gas Plant; Easton, Talbot County, Maryland Continuation Sheet

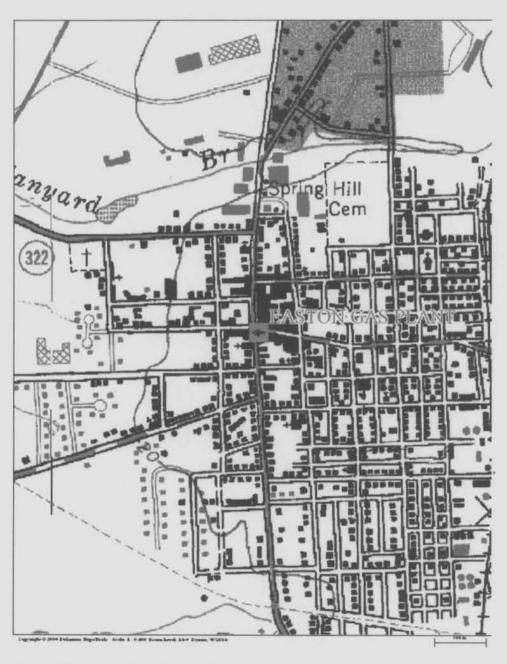


Figure 1 Easton Gas Plant Location

Inventory No. T-1156

Name Easton Gas Plant, Easton, Talbot County, Maryland Continuation Sheet

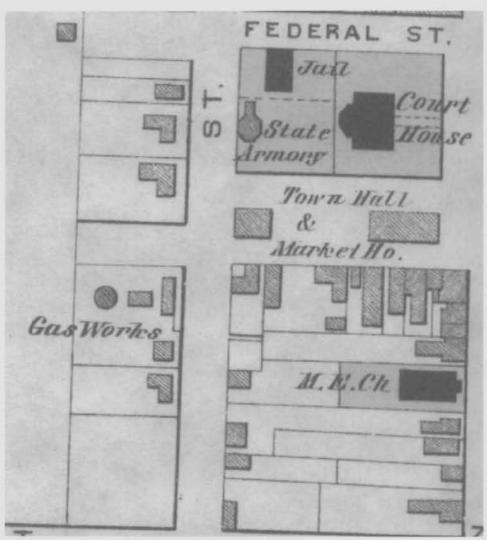


Figure 2 Town of Easton; 1877

Inventory No. T-1156

Name Easton Gas Plant, Easton, Talbot County, Maryland Continuation Sheet

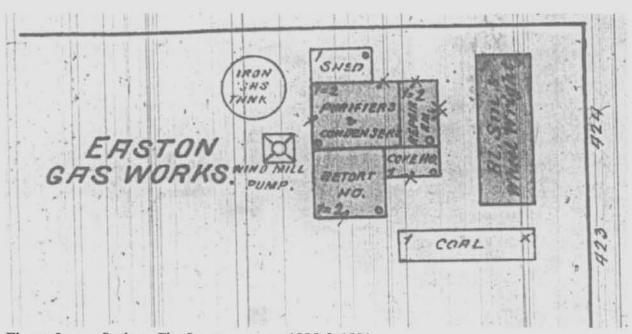


Figure 3 Sanborn Fire Insurance map; 1885 & 1891

Inventory No. T-1156

Name Easton Gas Plant, Easton, Talbot County, Maryland Continuation Sheet

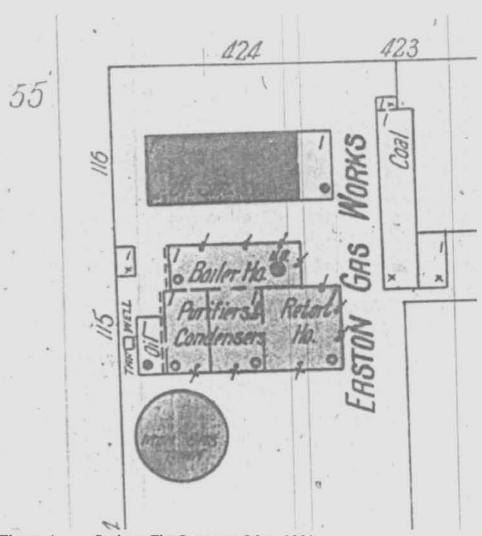


Figure 4 San

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map; 1901

Inventory No. T-1156

Name Easton Gas Plant, Easton, Talbot County, Maryland Continuation Sheet

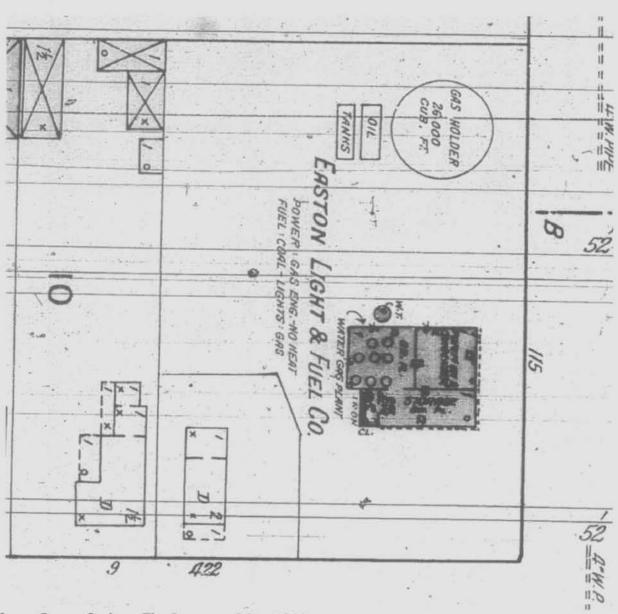


Figure 5 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map; 1919

Inventory No. T-1156

Name Easton Gas Plant, Easton, Talbot County, Maryland Continuation Sheet

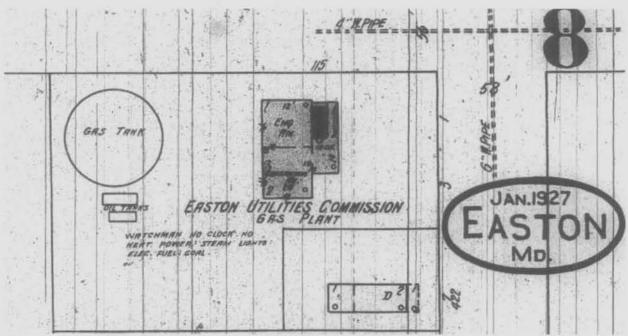


Figure 6 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map; 1927

Inventory No. T-1156

Name Easton Gas Plant, Easton, Talbot County, Maryland Continuation Sheet

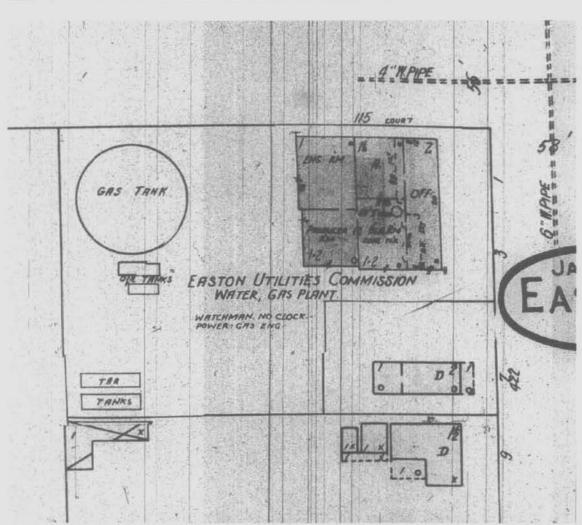


Figure 7 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map; c 1940 update

Inventory No. T-1156

Name Easton Gas Plant, Easton, Talbot County, Maryland Continuation Sheet

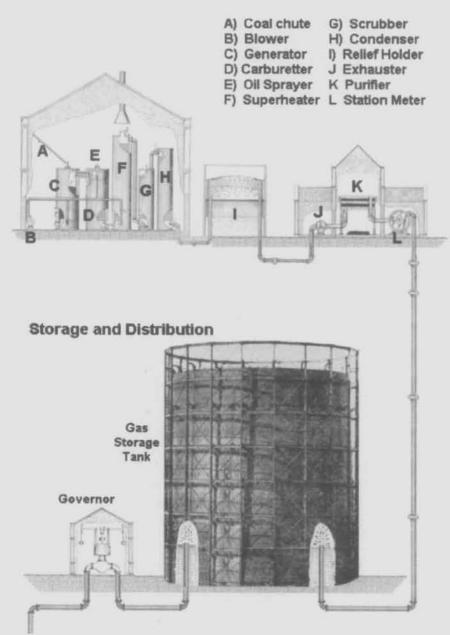


Figure 8 Typical Manufacturing Process

Inventory No. T-1156

Name Easton Gas Plant, Easton, Talbot County, Maryland Continuation Sheet

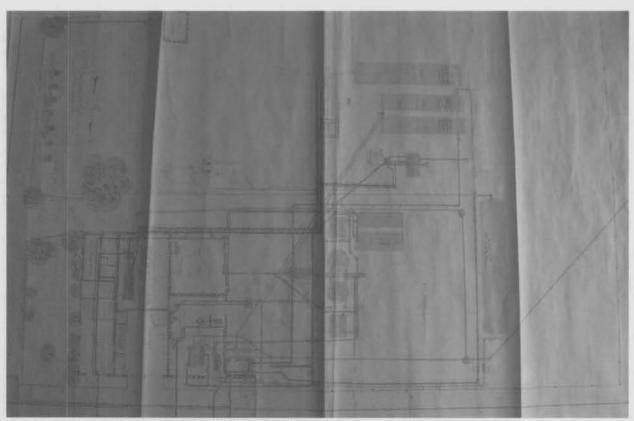


Figure 9 Easton Gas Plant; 1961 drawing

Inventory No. T-1156

Name Easton Gas Plant, Easton, Talbot County, Maryland Continuation Sheet

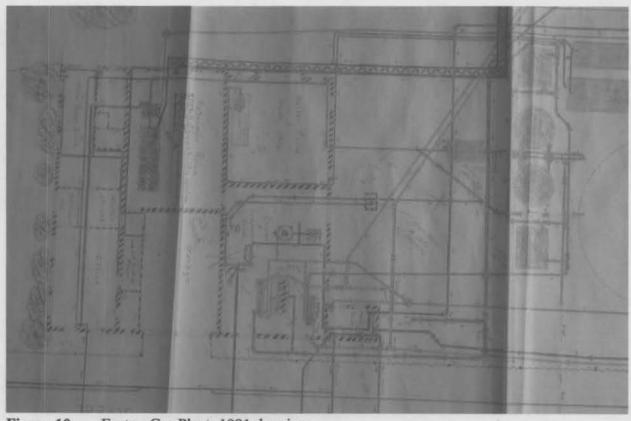


Figure 10 Easton Gas Plant; 1981 drawing

8. Signific	ance			Inventory No. T-1156
Period	Areas of Significance	Check and j	ustify below	
1600-1699 1700-1799 1800-1899 X 1900-1999 2000-	agriculture archeology architecture art commerce communications community planning conservation	economics education engineering entertainment/     recreation ethnic heritage exploration/     settlement	health/medicine _X industry invention landscape architecture law literature maritime history military	performing arts philosophy politics/government religion science social history transportation other:
Specific dates	1934		Architect/Builder	unknown
Construction da	ates 1934			
Evaluation for:				
X	National Register		Maryland Register	not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form — see manual.)

The Easton Gas Plant was constructed on a parcel of land that has been used to manufacture gas for heating and lighting in Easton since 1860. The current building was constructed in 1934 to replace an older building and to house equipment which reflected the change in gas manufacturing technology at that period. The building was used to manufacture gas until 1955. Since that time, it has been used by the Town of Easton/Easton Utilities to provide work and office space for the Town's gas system. The building was closed in 2001 when a new building was constructed elsewhere in Town. The Easton Gas Plant is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as an extension of the existing Easton Historic District which includes property on the east side of South West Street and directly across from this facility. The Easton Gas Plant is eligible under criterion A as an example of a municipal utility and a manufactured gas plant that was important to the growth and development of Easton from its initial operation in 1860 to 1955 but specifically for this building which was used for gas manufacture from 1934 to 1955.

Available secondary sources do not show when the Easton Gas Plant became operational. Based on the existing date stone or marquee on the façade of the current building, it would appear that operations started in 1860. The plant is shown on the 1877 Lake, Griffen, and Stevenson Atlas of Talbot County. This property atlas shows the gas works as having three buildings and a large gasholder. The first available Sanborn Fire Insurance map for the Town of Easton was published in 1885. At that time, the complex consisted of the main gas plant, a shop, a windmill house, the iron gas holder, a building or open storage for coal. For the remainder of the nineteenth century, the gas plant remained fairly stable. The shop on the West Street or east side of the property was removed between 1919 and 1901. It is likely that this building was removed to accommodate significant changes at the gas plant.

From the beginning, the gas plant was privately owned and sold its product to the Easton community. This was a common practice for this type of municipal utility and reflects a common pattern from the early nineteenth century of private ownership of internal improvements and infrastructure. The most common form of this type of ownership were canals, roads, and railroads. Manufactured gas was introduced into the United States at the end of the eighteenth century when an Italian manufacturer of fireworks known as M. Amboise Company experimented with gas illumination in Philadelphia. Gas for lighting was also show in 1802 at a fair or show in Richmond, Virginia. Individual experiments and demonstrations continued for the next several years. The first commercial manufactured gas plant was established in Baltimore, Maryland in 1816. This plant provided gas for dwellings and shops and for street lighting. It appears as if the plant was located near the harbor.

Based on the success of this plant, manufactured gas plants were built in all of the major cities of the United States. Larger cities such as Philadelphia and New York had numerous plants. As the technology proved itself and as the cost of construction was reduced, smaller cities and town also began to want a manufactured gas plant. The creation of a plant was seen as a point of civic pride and evidence of modern achievement. Easton's plant was the first on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and preceded the development of a gas manufacturing plant in Cambridge by thirty years.

The original Easton gas plant was a coal carbonization plant. Coal was heated in closed ovens. The gas from this heating process was collected and processed to sent by pipes to nearby homes, stores, government offices, and other customer sources. The coal gas was cooled and purified before being placed into an iron tank located near the process equipment. The gas was kept under pressure to ensure even and active flow to the plant's customers. The coal that was used to produce the gas had been converted into coke which

Inventory No. T-1156

Name Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 1

burned much hotter than coal and was actively sought by local industries in the larger cities. It is not clear if there was a local demand for coke in Easton. There were some steam sawmills and other steam-operated equipment but these might have been using wood or coal rather than coke. If there was not a local demand for coke, the excess most likely would have been shipped by boat to Baltimore or simply dumped locally if there was not a steady and reliable market for Easton's coke and other byproducts of gas manufacture.

The Easton Gas Plant continued to be privately owned until 1922. In 1919, S.M. Kitzmiller purchased the plant. He removed the existing building or altered it to accommodate a new process for making gas. Kitzmiller installed equipment to produce gas using the carburetted-water method. The carburetted process had been developed in the 1870s and was widely used for new plants. These plants were cheaper and easier to operate but they required an extensive alteration to the buildings and new equipment. The Sanborn Fire Insurance map for 1919 shows the new building or the altered building that Kitzmiller built in Easton. The field staff that prepared the map also showed some of the internal equipment installed at that time. Kitzmiller operated this plant until 1922 when he sold the property and the plant to the Town of Easton.

Easton had begun to generate its own electricity in 1887. The electric plant was acquired by the Town in 1915. Just prior to that, the Town had begun to install a municipal water and sewage system. In an effort to provide a full range of municipal services, the Town purchased the gas plant in 1922. They operated the old plant until 1934 with little changes to the building or to the process of manufacturing gas. In 1934, the Town of Easton replaced the existing building and equipment with new equipment based on the carburetted process. The Town operated the gas plant on West Street until 1955. At that time, they shifted to the use of natural gas rather than manufacture their own gas. The shift away from the use of locally manufactured gas had been growing since before World War II when there were extensive shortages of the raw materials to make gas. Many municipal gas-manufacturing plants were closed in the 1920s and the 1930s. Easton's gas plant was among the last in Maryland to be closed.

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. T-1156

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data				
Acreage of surveyed property _ Acreage of historical setting	.75 acres	<del></del>		
Quadrangle name	Easton	Quadrangle scale:		

Verbal boundary description and justification

This property includes only the building and the immediate area for a total of .75 acres. The area that was once included as part of the larger gas plant operation has been converted into parking areas and to use for the Easton Police Department Headquarterers.

# 11. Form Prepared by name/title Stephen G. Del Sordo; Historian/Architectural Historian organization Heritage Resource Group, Inc. date 15 December 2002 street & number 305 Oakley Street telephone 410-228-8934 city or town Cambridge state Maryland, 21613

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to:

Maryland Historical Trust DHCD/DHCP 100 Community Place Crownsville, MD 21032-2023 410-514-7600

#### Inventory No. T-1156

# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Name Continuation Sheet

Number 9 Page 1

#### **Bibliography**

#### American Gas Association

1930 The Story of Natural and Manufactured Gas; how it is produced, or made, and delivered to the customer. New York: American Gas Association, Inc.

#### Lake Griffen, and Stevenson

1977 Property Atlas of Talbot County, Maryland

#### Maryland Department of the Environment

2001 Brownfield Assessment Report; Former Easton Gas Manufacturing Plant, 1 South West Street, Easton, Talbot County, Maryland. Baltimore, MD: Maryland Department of the Environment

#### Morgan, Jerome John

1926 Manufactured Gas, A Textbook of American Practice. New York: J.J. Morgan.

1933 Home Study Course in American Gas Practice; Production of Manufactured Gas. New York: Columbia University Press.

#### Preston, Dickson J.

1983 Talbot Count; A History. Centreville, MD Tidewater Publishers.

#### Sanborn Fire Insurance Company

Various Fire Insurance Maps of the Town of Easton, Maryland 1885-1940.

#### Weeks, Christopher, ed.

1984 Where Land and Water Intertwine: An Architectural History of Talbot County, Maryland. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press

#### Wyer, Samuel S.

1923 Manufactured Gas in the Home. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.



T- 11 = 3 Transport of the



1/8



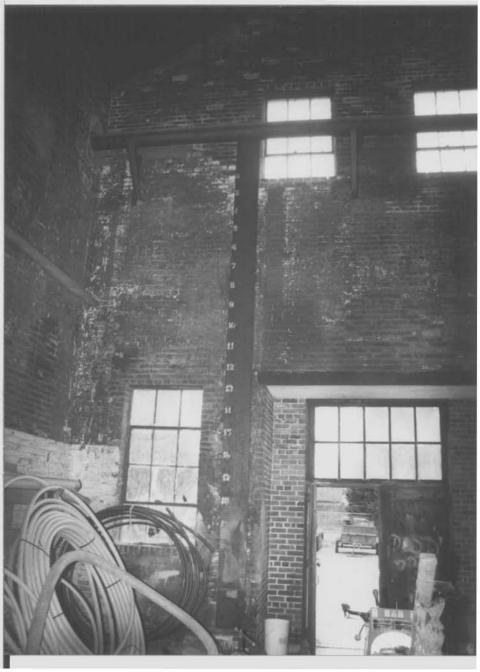
1 - In Ges Plant Talbut county, MD Store Del Suit Dec 2002 TOBO MDE MINISTER view from su



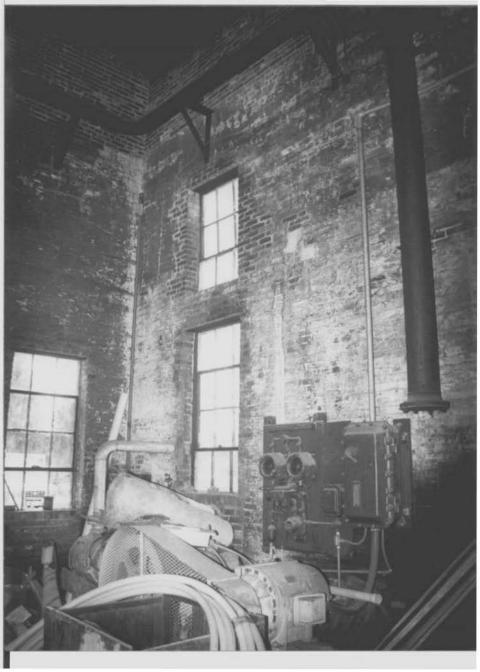
F-11:6 Tell + County 10 Stove Del Sur 20 Dec Joux MSE interior; escipnent room; were from NE



T= 1156 E es An Ges " not Tel Sot danny, D Store DelSurb Dec 2002 MOE Interiors secondary process room , were these IV



T-1156 Ecston Cos Plant Talbet county, 17) Store Del Sud De 2002 7725 ineini siray Looms were from 19



T-11-6 Easton Gas Plant Telset County, 10) ster 2/50/4 Dec 2002 MDE Interior; primary process were the for it



- 1156 Exitor Grs Plant Tolbet county, 17) Stere Del Suis Dec 2002 2002 FH MURRITORO MOF Interior; 2 - Their meter Bear



1 a Ston Gas Part Tollor county, -) 50 5400 Was from E 15-27



T-1156 Easton Gas Plant West Stat Doverst Easton Telbet county, M) Tom Miller MD SHPO View from E - entrence 20/27



7-1156 Easton Gas Plant hist st of Dovenst Ecston Tolbet County, 17) Tom M. Hor MD S HPD View from E-1stflown 3 of 27



J-1156 Easton Gas Plant West Stat Dover St Erston Telbot Commy 10 Ton - lor Wearfrom UE 437-19



T-1156 Easton Ges Pleat hest stat Doverst Easton Ton of en MD SHPD Wow from N



tos-on so ? of west st et vouer st Leston 1-160+ cant, 10 Use from In 6 25.29



T-1156 Easton Gas Phart West Sted Dover st Frston 240 13 1/ex Weatron a 75-27



T-1156 Easton Gas Plant west st ct Dover St Erston Telbot county, my Tom Miller MD SHAD View firm w 80f27



Esston Gas Plant west of at Down st Easton To/but count (-) Tom Miller MD SHOK view from su 90127



T-1156 Easton Gas Plant west it of Doverst Faston Tolbut County, 17) Tom Myller MO SHPO View from 5 10 of 27



T-1156 Erston Gas Plant hest st at Doven St Ecston



T-1156 Egston Go Plant west St at Dover St Easton That county, 19 Ion Miller MD SHPO en-rence hell by you from w



T-1156 Easton Gry Dlant west stat year St Easton Telbut county Jon 1 /61 MD 3 HPB 1st floor office you from we



7-1156 Easton Gas Plant wasy stat Doverst Tolbot County, 7) Tom Millor MO SHRO 1st floor office vocation SE



7-1156 Faston Gas Plant west St of Doven St Easton Tolbet county, 190 Tom 17,1100 MD SHPO 1stfloor- en side enture half Henfrom IV 15 of 27



T-1 FG Erston So Port 110-1- 124-7000 10 100 MD 8400 1st flour - near office Lou from v 16 / 23



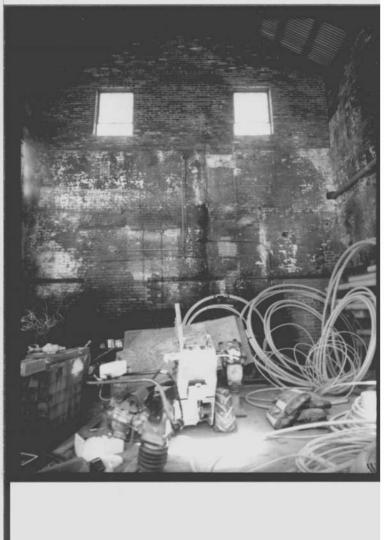
T-1156 Easton Gos Plant hest st of Dover st Ecston Tolbut courty 17) Tom Miller MD SHPG 1stfloor - Plucess room Henfrom NW 170f27



T-1156 Easton Gas Plant hest st of Dover st Ecston, Tolbet occity, 19 Tom Miller MD 3400 1stfloor process room Viention NE 18º of 27



J-12 22 Tolan Count --- Does st Tom Miller MD SHPO 1st floor - vary Process Rum weather "



-1156 Erston Grs Phat host st of weest Enston Tolbut county 17D Jon Miller 100 5HPO 1st floor - mone tecture con Hen tioms 20 407



7-416 E. V-S. Crs Plant West Stat Doce St Eoston Toland Courty, ") Jan - 2 15- 1132 - 11 Ny - 20- 34 2000 LICA from NE 210



1156 Easton Gas Phat west St et Dover St Erston Telbut County, 17) Tom Miller 1st floor propotentine Boom Weatin WE 2001/1



- 1156 Easton Oar Part -om 1-1/2 100 5 HAD 15 fleur montantere 1000 montrom NW 88.722



7-1156 Easton Gas Plant west stat Done Tom 14, Per steirs veations 290127



- 756 Faston Cas Plant 11-54 St of Dyn St £05+50 70160+ contin ) -5 of 27



T-1156 Easton Cas Plant west of of Doust Erston Tolbet county 170 Tom in Mer MD 5480 2 de \$100x - repoir 10011 yea from New



T-1156 Erston Cas Plant wast 5t of wore St Talbet County, 1) Jan Ston - report 100m wen from se